

SAFEGUARDING "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" (FOUO) INFORMATION

1. The "For Official Use Only" (FOUO) marking is assigned to information at the time of its creation in a DoD User Agency. It is not authorized as a substitute for a security classification marking but it is used on official government information that may be withheld from the public under exemptions 2 through 9 of the Freedom of Information Act.
2. Other non-security markings, such as "Limited Official Use" and "Official Use Only" are used by non-DoD User Agencies for the same type of information and should be safeguarded and handled in accordance with instructions received from such agencies.
3. Use of the above markings does not mean that the information cannot be released to the public, only that it must be reviewed by the Government prior to its release to determine whether a significant and legitimate government purpose is served by releasing the information or portions of it.

4. **IDENTIFICATION MARKINGS:**

- a. Within an unclassified document, an individual page that contains FOUO and unclassified information will be marked at the top and bottom with the words "UNCLASSIFIED // FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" appearing on the page.
- b. Within a classified document, an individual page that contains FOUO and classified information will be marked at the top and bottom with the highest security classification appearing on the page. If an individual portion contains FOUO information but no classified information, the portion will be marked, "FOUO".
- c. Any "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" information released to a contractor by a DoD User Agency is required to be marked with the following statement prior to transfer:

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION EXEMPT FROM MANDATORY DISCLOSURE
UNDER THE FOIA. EXEMPTIONS_(TO BE COMPLETED AS
APPROPRIATE)_____APPLY.
- d. Removal of the "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" marking can only be accomplished by the originator or other competent authority. When the "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" status is terminated, all known holders will be notified to the extent practical.

5. **DISSEMINATION:** Contractors may disseminate "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" information to their employees and subcontractors who have a need for the information in connection with the contract.

6. **STORAGE:** During working hours, "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" information shall be placed in an out-of-sight location if the work area is accessible to persons who do not have a need for the information. During non-working hours, the information shall be stored to preclude unauthorized access. Filing such material with other unclassified records in unlocked files or desks, is adequate when internal building security is provided during non-working hours. When such internal security control is not exercised, locked buildings or rooms will provide adequate after-hours protection or the material can be stored in locked receptacles such as file cabinet, desks or bookcases.

7. **TRANSMISSION**: "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" information may ***not*** be placed on publicly accessible Web Pages. FOUO information may be transmitted through normal electronic mail (e-mail) systems. However, since e-mail messages are frequently recorded and stored on both the originating and receiving mail servers all reasonable steps, including the use of commonly available encryption technologies, will be used to safeguard the information whenever practical. FOUO information may be sent via first-class mail or parcel post. Bulky shipments may be sent by fourth-class mail or small package carriers. Remember, unclassified information when combined with other available data, may become sensitive or even classified. This presents a significant threat to the information resource. Good Operational Security (OPSEC) practices should be used at all times to prevent inadvertent and/or unauthorized disclosure.

8. **DISPOSITION**: When no longer needed, FOUO information must be disposed of by tearing each copy into pieces to preclude reconstructing, and placing it in a regular trash container or as directed by the User Agency.

9. **UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE**: Unauthorized disclosure of "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" information does not constitute a security violation but the agency originating the FOUO document should be informed of any unauthorized disclosure. The unauthorized disclosure of FOUO information protected by the Privacy Act may result in criminal sanctions.